

Hello,

The following is my submission to the effects that my family and I have endured as a result of the contamination leaching out from Williamstown RAAF Base.

14 years ago my wife and I purchased our property at 336 Cabbage Tree rd Williamstown.

A year later our son Cameron was born there, then two years later we had our second child, a girl named Simone.

The area out the back was partially cleared by the bush fire brigade as a fire break around that time and in doing so revealed a dam.

We cleared the scrub around it and made a lovely little camp area where our little family would play have picnics and swim.

It sounds idyllic and it was, until such time as the news broke about the PFOS and PFOA contamination.

Our little piece of paradise and the memories of our kids swimming in our own safe little private spot were smashed, wiped out by thoughts of what damage had been done to them.

In the privacy of our own home our children and indeed ourselves had been subjected to toxic chemicals and indeed done so secretly by the RAAF over the other side of the bush, who were there (as we were told) to protect us.

Our faith in the statements which had been coming out of the base for years about being "Good Neighbours" went right out the window.

We did not now know what we could do, the more I chased up and the more people I talked to, including the NSW Premier and the NSW Environment Minister and the less I was able to get out of the RAAF the more concerned and worried I became.

I requested on my water test form for the dam to be tested, and stated quite emphatically that if it wasn't done then not to do the bore. None the less out comes two people from RAAF to test the bore and nothing else.

This was again another slap in the face from RAAF, all they were interested in was gathering their own data and not interested in our health, to date they still have not bothered to test the dam nor the drain at the back of our property which links up to Dawsons drain.

We had moved from this property two years ago to Medowie and kept our Cabbage tree rd property as an investment nest egg. We have tenants in there now who were using the area near the dam as we did.

We are now in a position of when they move out that we will be hard pressed to find new tenants, we have a mortgage on both our properties and need the rental income. If they go our financial position will be tenuous to say the least.

Our Cabbage Tree rd property is now worthless, banks are not lending in the area and we do not have any recourse. We won't be able to sell it, we won't be able to keep it and our home in Medowie, so we will be forced back into the contamination zone.

How is that for something to talk about over dinner, by the way kids we are going to sell our safe not contaminated home to move back to the old contaminated one because the RAAF has polluted our future.

Our stress levels are through the roof, at times both my wife and I find it hard to sleep and it is all we can do to keep this position from affecting our children.

We have had to reassure them that they are fine to allow their lives to suffer as little as possible, but we do not know this for certain, but what else can we do.

We do not know the levels of contamination that they have been subjected to, we do not know what levels of PFOS and or PFOA are in their blood and we do not know what we will do about the property on Cabbage Tree rd which we are still paying off, now worth absolutely zero thanks to our protectors at the RAAF Base Williamstown.

At present stage we are suffering from information underload thanks to the RAAF's lack of community spirit and have contaminated property for our retirement thanks to the RAAF's lack of following their own procedures and ignorance of any duty of care outside the fence line.

We are suffering and probably will continue to suffer until either A; we die or B; the RAAF fixes up their mess and what they have done to us.

Not holding my breath for option B judging by their current lack of empathy.

My apologies if I sound a bit over the top here, but this is exactly what we are living with, not our doing, not our fault, but it is what the RAAF has done to us and what we are living with every day.

Thank you

Desmond Maslen